



# The Thanks We Get

*The Thanks We Get* features letters of appreciation from patients, their families, the community and the UMDNJ staff. We thank them for reminding us of everything we do to help and heal our patients.

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*Recently, NorthSTAR was called upon to transport a patient with a traumatic brain injury to an out-of-state Level 1 Trauma Center. When the crew landed, they were met with some unforeseen problems in accessing the elevator. The following letter was written from the Trauma Director of this facility to Hosseinali Shahidi, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor, Emergency Department.*

I would like to commend your **NorthSTAR Flight Crew** for responding so well to the unexpected situation. They include: Flight Nurse, **Marybeth Wiedemann**, Flight Paramedic, **Rick Witzel**, and New Jersey State Troopers, **Dan Vanco** and **Patrick Balunis**. Based on their judgment of the acuity of this patient's injuries, balanced against the time necessary to reload the patient and move her to another facility, they made the calculated decision to carry the patient down two flights of steps where elevator access was made available. I believe, that in the interest of assuring the most immediate evaluation of the patient, this was an appropriate and valiant decision. The crew is to be commended for their commitment to quality patient care.

*This simple note to the **G-Blue Staff**, says it all.*

Thank you for all your help, well wishes, smiles and kind words. I am getting better now! I miss you and love you.

*When your child gets sick while traveling, it is a very frightening experience, as expressed in the following letter by a thankful father.*

I would like to express my utmost gratitude to paramedics, **Charlene Barber**, **John McAleer** and **Andrew Koehler**. I was

traveling from New Jersey to Washington, DC, when my young son fell ill in Penn Station. He suffers from a life-threatening illness called mitochondrial disease. His symptoms are primarily in the GI tract, including terrible nausea. It can escalate very quickly to the point where he requires urgent hospitalization and high doses of IV medication. The paramedic team arrived very quickly. Each person was amazing. This was the only team that successfully put an IV into my son in the ambulance (within 5 seconds); obtained an EKG; and did a finger stick, which showed low blood sugar. The EMT's administered glucose and by the time we arrived in your ED, my son was already feeling better. When you go through difficult times, it means the world to encounter people like Charlene, John and Andy. I appreciate their kindness, compassion and professionalism.

***Gloria Igwe, NM**, and the **nurses** of the **Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)**, received this heartfelt letter from a very grateful, new mother.*

My four day-old son fell off our bed. My husband and I immediately took him to our local hospital, but after his first CT scan, which showed an epidural hematoma, he was transferred to UH. The **doctors in the ED** attended to my son immediately and thankfully, he did not require surgery. During the next 36 hours my son was given amazing care and support in the NICU. All the nurses were skilled and intelligent. **Margaret Ozuzu, RN**, was kind enough to make sure my husband I had a place to sleep, blankets and even a toothbrush. The nurses gave us continual updates and explained what they were doing. Despite the intensity of this situation, I was still able to learn about general baby care from the nurses. Thanks to the talented staff of the NICU, my son is home and doing very well.

*Here's a letter from a patient, who was helped both physically and emotionally.*

I had very complicated surgery, but due to the knowledge and expertise of my surgical team, I am recovering and feeling better than ever. I would like to especially thank surgeons **Dr. Soly Baredes** and **Dr. Justin Sambol** for their professionalism and compassion. They did a terrific job and helped me endure the stress. I would like to also express my appreciation to the **nurses** and **support staff** in the **Cardio-thoracic ICU**. They were outstanding! Finally, I'd like to thank **Regina Copeland, RN**, who helped me through a very difficult time.



*The process of healing and recovery has many ups and downs. But when everyone works together, great things can happen.*

My husband was blessed to receive a liver transplant on April 18<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, he developed problems with his anti-rejection medications. But now, thanks to the care provided by the **F-Yellow Staff**, I am thrilled to say, he is recovering wonderfully. Everyone from the **nursing supervisors, nurses, nursing assistants, Environmental Services staff** and **physicians**, dedicated themselves to giving my husband the best possible care. Because of you, he is getting better each day!



*The writer of the following note highlights the work of two highly caring nurses.*

Thank you for the excellent care I received in the **Cardiothoracic** and **Coronary Care Units**. The concern, medical knowledge and compassion I was given is greatly appreciated. **Amor Stark, RN**, and **Marissa Obrera, RN**, were angels on earth. You can truly be proud of them.



*Teamwork Works! Just read this letter!*

I thank everyone who helped while I was a patient on **E-Blue**, and that includes: the **physicians, nurses, trauma teams, Environmental Services staff, occupational therapists, social workers** and the **Patient Advocacy Department**. The world is a better place because of you!

*In the fast paced world of health care, it's heartening to see the positive impact made by an outstanding nursing.*

I am writing in appreciation for the superlative care given to my wife by **Edward Van Wagner, RN**, while she was in the **Surgical Intensive Care Unit**. I worked as an EMT and received excellent training, so I know something about nursing care. That's why I was so impressed by the knowledge of Nurse Van Wagner. My wife told me that when she opened her eyes, she saw a figure that she described as a "bright glow in the room." She said it was an angel. I know that angel was Edward Van Wagner, RN. I would like to thank him for giving me my wife back.



*This card of appreciation was sent to the following members of the **Coronary Care Unit**: **Waheda Davis, RN, Lilia Espiritu, RN, Abdul Mangual, PCT, Janet Mosley, RN, Patricia Jones, NM, Josie Aban, RN, and Ivy Isaac, RN.***

Thanks a million for all the exceptional care that you provided to me. You are a very virtuous group of nurses. Your excellent care has resulted in my speedy recovery.



*The following letter, addressed to **Brandon Mbuakoto**, Director of Radiology, indicates that his staff works as a cohesive unit and responds collectively to the unique needs of each patient.*

I would like to acknowledge your exemplary staff who treated my differently-abled daughter with care, compassion, patience and professionalism. They include: the Front Desk Staff of **Gregory Judkins, Elven Cruz**, and **Michael Matos** who greeted us with a smile and quickly provided us with helpful information, and Radiology Technologist, **Sandra Davis** who was kind and gracious.



*Sometimes just by "doing your job", you become a hero.*

On June 21<sup>st</sup>, my family's life changed. My son was shot and brought to University Hospital. Because of the heroics of **Renee Scott**, Coordinator, Reception Desk, and her **Reception Desk Team**, my beloved son is alive today. I wish to commend these individuals for going beyond the call of duty. Ms. Scott's

professionalism, compassion, and organizational skills, along with her ability to manage her team, helped my family and I cope with this devastating event. Thank you!!!



*The following letter speaks volumes about the staff of our **Neuro Intensive Care Unit (NICU)**.*

My husband was brought to your **Emergency Department** after suffering an aneurysm. He was treated quickly and then admitted into the **NICU** under the care of neurosurgeon, **Dr. Chirag Gandhi**. This event was overwhelming and frightening. During my husband's stay, both he and I were treated with kindness, consideration and respect. I would like to commend the **doctors** who worked rapidly to assess my husband's condition and perform the necessary procedures that saved his life. But most significantly, I want to commend the **nurses** and **nursing assistants** who took care of my husband. It was obvious to me that these individuals loved their jobs and are committed to saving lives. No matter what the task, they did it responsibly. I'd like to give a special thanks to **Ritchie Goines, NM, Amor Stark, RN, and Chinwe Obasi, RN**. They greeted me every morning with encouragement and support, answered all my questions. I am indebted to them.



*Excellent nursing care is just as important to the family, as it is to the patient. This is clearly expressed in the next letter.*

My husband, a patient on **H-Yellow** was cared for by two exceptional nurses, **Joscelyne Crevecoeur, RN** and **Jeanette Lee, RN**. These two nurses were patient, considerate, pleasant at all times and made a tremendous difference in my husband's stay. Whenever I had a question or concern about medications, they would take the time to explain. I felt my concerns were valued and taken seriously. When I asked questions for which they did not have an answer, they would

investigate and get back to me in a timely manner. They also instructed me regarding my husband's home care. It is such a great relief for family members to know your loved ones are being cared for by nurses who go the extra mile. These nurses did just that. I want to express my sincere gratitude to them for their professionalism and compassion. They should be honored for their continued commitment to the nursing profession.



*Hats off to the dedicated staff who provided excellent care and a sense of safety to this patient.*

I have been in the hospital for approximately 3 weeks and everyone here has been dedicated and devoted. They should be commended for a job well done. I would like to give a special thanks to all the **nurses** and **nursing assistants** on **E-Blue**. They were helpful, pleasant, and truly help those who cannot help themselves. In their presence, I felt safe and comfortable. I would also like to thank the **Environmental Services staff**, who ensured my room was clean from top to bottom. A special thanks to **Lavern Allen, NM**, for keeping everything and everyone in order. I love you all.



*This letter reminds us, that even if the patient outcome is not what we desired, when a patient receives excellent care, it is never forgotten.*

I'd like to thank **Chris VanRumpt, Food and Nutrition Services**, and all the other **UH staff** who attended my mom's funeral. Their presence and prayers have made this change easier. I appreciate their dedication, compassion and professionalism in the care of my mom. I would also like to thank the following people who provided extraordinary care to my mother. You will always be remembered: **Gloria Tandoc, RN, Agnes Ramirez, RN** and **James Coleman, NA**, who was full of compassion and parting words; physical therapist, **Marcia Downer** and the **Physical Therapy Team**; social worker **Vivian Ojomo**, who explained everything in a kind manner and invited me to call her anytime; **Tricia Joseph, RN** from **I-Blue**; and cardiologist, **Dr. Onajite Onadowan**.

